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Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Honored with Statewide Award

Coalition awards its Project of the Year Award

Topeka, Kan., February 20, 2014— The Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation Tribal Victim Services program has received the Project of the Year Award by the Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV).

Prairie Band was awarded the honor during KCSDV's 11th Annual Safe Homes, Safe Streets Awareness Day and Sunflower Safety Breakfast event in Topeka in February. Several members of the Tribal Council and staff attended the event and accepted the award.

Since 1995, KCSDV has been recognizing outstanding advocates and allies who are working to enhance victim safety, to increase perpetrator accountability, and to prevent and eliminate sexual and domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking in Kansas.

Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation was honored with the statewide award for the SAFESTAR (Sexual Assault Forensic Examination Safety, Training, and Resources) project on behalf of the Tribal Victim Services program. Their SAFESTAR project, sponsored by the Southwest Center for Law and Policy, is one of only two in the nation. Overall there are 20 SAFESTAR volunteers, and six of those reside with Prairie Band. SAFESTAR involves teaching volunteers to help victims of sexual assault through medical and law processes and has been recognized as an important means of addressing sexual violence against Indian women. Samantha Wahquahboshkuk, also a Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation member, heads the SAFESTAR project.

“We are pleased to recognize this innovative project and the outstanding work of Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation,” said Joyce Grover, executive director for KCSDV. “They have been part of several national projects and received recognitions for their work on improving responses to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault through their Tribal Victim Services program.”

Other award winners at this year's event included Shirley Collins from Overland Park for the Outstanding Advocate of the Year Award; Helen LaValley from Overland Park for the Volunteer of the Year Award; and Soroptimist International of Hays, Kansas for the Community Ally of the Year Award.

Photos available upon request.

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Founded in 1982, the purpose of KCSDV is the prevention and elimination of sexual and domestic violence through a statewide network of programs providing support and safety for all victims of sexual and domestic violence and stalking, with primary focus on women and their children; direct services; public awareness and education; advocacy for victims; comprehensive prevention; and, social change efforts. Learn more at www.kcsdv.org.